

HI ASIO

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//ALL TOTALLY FICTIONAL//

HI

ASIO

**THIS ZINE WAS WRITTEN AND DESIGNED MOVING BETWEEN
AWABAKAL, WORIMI, JURU AND BIRRI COUNTRY**

**UNDER THE COBBLESTONES:
STOLEN LAND**

**OUR OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE WITH LIFE, ART, ACTIVISM,
POLITICS, PROPAGANDA, ACTION & RIOTING IS LEVERAGED
OFF THE GENOCIDE, DISPOSSESSION AND OPPRESSION OF
FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE.**

**THESE HARMS ARE BOTH HISTORICAL AND CURRENT, AND
THEY MUST BE ACTIVELY CONFRONTED BY ANYONE WHO
CLAIMS TO BE WORKING TOWARD BUILDING A 'BETTER
WORLD'.**

ALWAYS WAS ALWAYS WILL BE

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I quickly clamber up over the small rise towards the train line. The calls have been made, I have done all my checks; Harness, buckles, prussic, carabina, triple checked my knots, food bag, water, phone charged and in reception.

Ready.to.fucking.climb.

I grind my teeth and snarl as I rapidly grind my body through the motions. The tripod rises. The rail company has been called with my exact location, crossing number, precise GPS coordinates.

No coal is coming today.

I hook in and leg extend, arm push-lock, leg extend, arm push-lock 10m to the top of the pod.

I'm here now, dangling, panting, scanning, readjusting, settling in for a long night. I feel safe, empowered. I've practiced for this moment. The sun has some last glances at my grinning face before it disappears behind the mountain range in the distance.

I've brought a comically large hat with me, attached around my neck with a DIY cord system that a friend made. It's pretty useless now and along with my speed-dealer sunnies that I picked up it has been a large part of my bush-gurn aesthetic as I cut across the landscape for most of the day sussing things out.

I close my eyes and laugh – Elfboy cackling alone 10m up a tripod in the setting sun as I realise how useless these objects are to me right now. Never leave your speedies at home tho IMO.

The birds cackle with me. We are on the same side, fighting the same fight even though I won't ever be able to tell them that directly... but I fucking FEEL it and that's the most important thing right now.

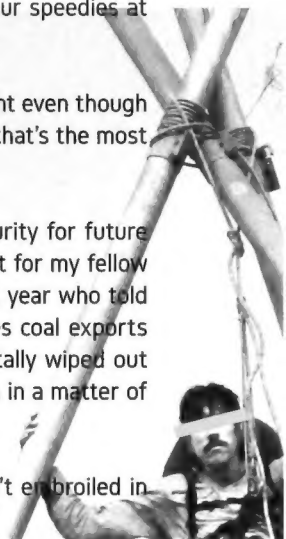
I scan through all that I am fighting for; Clean drinking water, food security for future generations, the protection of the reef, which is already in turmoil. I fight for my fellow humans. For the young students from Tuvalu and Kiribati who I met last year who told me I had to take responsibility and DO something because my countries coal exports meant that they would be the first two nations on the planet to be totally wiped out by sea level rise... whole cultures and countries disappearing into the sea in a matter of decades.

I fight for myself. I fight for my own access to a stable society that isn't embroiled in wars and border conflicts over basic human needs.

And this is my worst fear... That a world in spiralling climate instability will force us into an era where myself and others just like me... YOU, will be conscripted into killing others over resources either on our shores or someone else's because we simply didn't fucking act in time.

I think about how much I want to be a father, an increasing drive and dream, as I get older.

What sort of a world would I want children to live in, not just mine, but any???



These thoughts flash through my mind and solidify. There is no question about the actions that are needed anymore. We need to stop the massively over- bloated corrupt oligarchy that feeds itself off our sweat and blood, off the dispossession and genocide of First Nations people the world over, off the absurdist destruction of the ecosystem that supports every one of us. All this to protect the interests of a select few in an echelon of society that is hard to even imagine.

When the Oxfam report was released in 2017 detailing that 8 men owned more wealth than the bottom 50% of the global population that was the final straw for me.

I just want to make one thing clear.

The system isn't broken, it's doing EXACTLY what it was designed to do.

And it's that system we need to block, disrupt, dismantle, put our bodies in front of, shutdown, overgrow and overrun.

Adani's proposed megamine in the Galilee basin is a part of this global system of oppression and destruction and I feel privileged enough to be in a country where I can take this sort of action against it without major violence towards protesters. And it's this privilege that all of us here on this continent must wield, now. Adani is set to open the largest coal basin in the world, and foster the growth of the largest single point of coal exports on the face of the planet.

We simply cannot let this happen. For the safety of all of the systems that we rely on, for fresh water, for the food we eat, for the air we breath we cannot let the opening and burning of new fossil fuel projects continue.

Coming up north to the Shut Down Adani Blockade to meet and live with people who are driven by the same basic empathy and concern has been utterly refreshing and empowering. Up here I have been welcomed into a loving community of people from all walks of life. I have contributed to a community by both taking action and helping cook, clean and garden. I have been embraced in having my voice active in meetings and planning sessions as the community here run on an open, consensus model where ALL people are heard within the space. I encourage anyone who wants to be part of actions up here to get involved.

I managed to stop all coal going into Adani's Abbot Point coal terminal for 8 hours, BUT this was just a small part of rolling actions from others amazing people which shut down coal movements for more than 72 hours, 3 days.

We saw multiple treesits, we saw people locked onto coal trains, and we saw people locked onto the rails. I'll definitely link those livestreams below so you can check them out.

You might ask why would these people and myself take this specific type of action? Its simple, I come at this from an empirical and historical position; Direct Action and Civil Disobedience WORKS. Most (if not all) major social and systemic shifts have come from grassroots communities putting themselves in the way of the mechanisms that continue oppressions and injustices. Whether that machine is social or physical infrastructure, people using tactics of disruption and the contravention of unjust laws have been the mainstay of lasting social change for centuries.

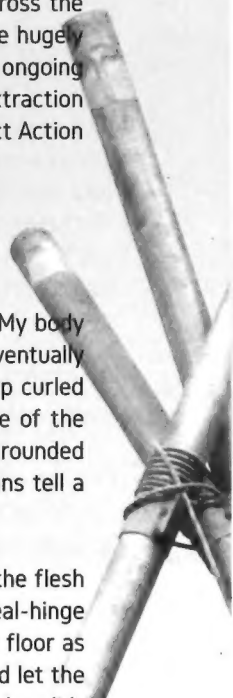
From the suffragette movement, to the civil rights movement that swept across the globe in the 60's and 70's, to the Franklin Dam campaign in Tasmania and the hugely successful and recent Bentley Blockade in the Northern Rivers, NSW, to the ongoing resistance by First Nations communities fighting against abusive resource extraction across this continent, it is clear that communities standing up and taking Direct Action works.

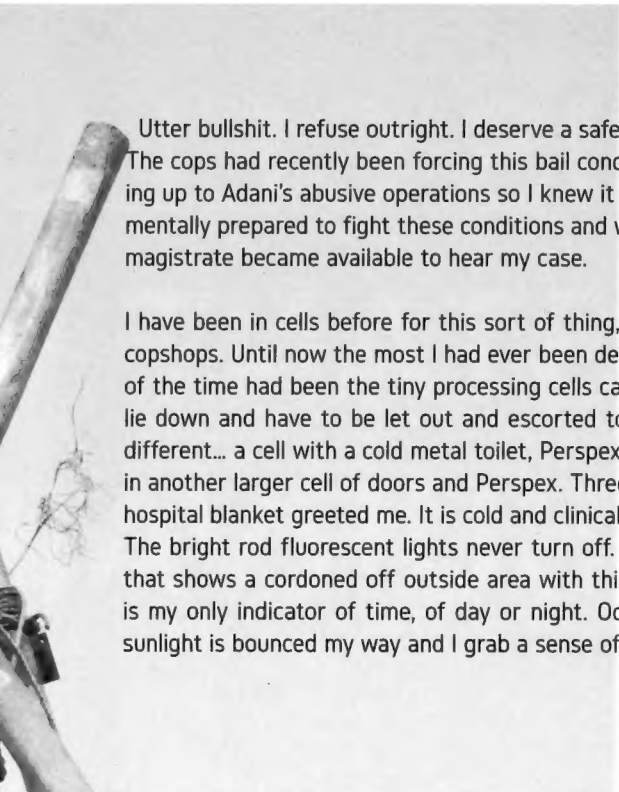


Hours pass as I considered the weight of my own direct action. Slowly the police work to remove me from the tripod. It's a tedious process. My body slumps as I jump on and off a livestream in which I tell people why I'm here. Eventually I am removed, handcuffed and driven an hour to Bowen police station. I sleep curled up in the mud and blood scuffed dirty white pod in the back. It reminds me of the inside of an old esky. Gnarled with functional turns. All the curves creepily rounded and designed not to cause harm... but the blackened clot of inbuilt bloodstains tell a different story.

But I am beyond tired. So I calm and accept. I ball up into myself and wedge the flesh of my palm under my head, which I can just manage with the wall-like thick steal-hinge handcuffs that QLD police use. Half asleep I slide back and forth on the dirty floor as we fly through country roads, but no matter, it's just nice to close my eyes and let the world happen for a brief moment. I smile to myself - Relaxed mammal in an esky, gliding caged through the universe... I know I will write about this later.

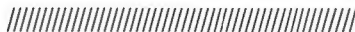
We get to the copshop and I get processed. They immediately slap harsh bail conditions on me that mean I cannot go back to the community and property that I am staying at.





Utter bullshit. I refuse outright. I deserve a safe place to sleep and to see my friends. The cops had recently been forcing this bail condition on others that had been standing up to Adani's abusive operations so I knew it was likely to come. Fortunately, I was mentally prepared to fight these conditions and willing to stay in police custody until a magistrate became available to hear my case.

I have been in cells before for this sort of thing, so I am no stranger to the inside of copshops. Until now the most I had ever been detained was around 8 hours, and most of the time had been the tiny processing cells called 'fishtanks', where you can't even lie down and have to be let out and escorted to the bathroom. This was something different... a cell with a cold metal toilet, Perspex lined, cameras, double locking doors in another larger cell of doors and Perspex. Three square rubber sleeping matts and a hospital blanket greeted me. It is cold and clinical. The air smells like inside circulation. The bright rod fluorescent lights never turn off. I can see the reflection of a window that shows a cordoned off outside area with thick metal grating as a roof, just... this is my only indicator of time, of day or night. Occasionally an angry overcast grid of sunlight is bounced my way and I grab a sense of passing.



**THIS CELL
CONSTANT V
SURVAIL**

**IS UNDER
VIDEO/AUDIO
LLENCE**

Is spray painted tar black in aggressive block letters above headheight at the far end of the cell. I look up at the words and let them seep into me. I try to get comfortable with being caged. The cell is cut in half along the walls. Up to chest height the walls, floor, the bed bench that's moulded out of the floor in a single unending curved rectangle, the small 'privacy' triangle for the toilet, are all painted a soft baby blue; matte, no reflection, eating light in a way much too passive for this place. A toothy blue grinning. It's Lynchian. The rest of the cell is cream white above this. It looms over me. I feel small and strange. I nest in the corner. All environmental changes are noticed. Every coming and going is a potential. I am starved of information and contact. I fold into my body and my mind and sleep for the most part. Shutting down seems like the most healthy option.



It is two days and two nights until I am finally released.

Moved through the court system. Hauled another 100km south. Cells are changed for older brick monstrosities that are moist in the back corner with graffiti scratches blossoming throughout like an archaeological dig site.

Jason 1993
FUCK
PROSERPINE
DOG
COPS

I study these gouged words and try to place timelines and stories together; a mass grave of agitated articulations. Jason appears again in '96 with an arrow pointing to his original work with the words "back again" at the base.

It's hard not to smile at this, and I beam. Jason is a friend here as I stare out through the barred 2cm thick plastic. The smile turns to a harder stare as I glance at the angry sky. I know that I'll be back again too and I consciously haul another thickly hewn slab from the bedrock of my innocence and place it on the growing mental bunker I am constructing. This is the darker side of my mindfulness. A shadow zen that sharpens

the will to a constant crouching ambush.
“Get fucking used to this.” I whisper to myself.
If the world is cages within cages then it doesn't matter anyway.

At least this cage is outside. Spittle bounces through grills as it starts to piss down. This cage is nestled down the side of the copshop, shunned to the back corner of a gravel carpark. There is bliss here however because I can see directly across the road to the IGA. I dreamily watch people skitter through the rain and imagine who they could all possibly be; true moments of sonder.

A man, cap, sunnies and all who feebly tries to cover himself with the egg carton he clutches. He runs like a frog, raising his knees slightly too high for comfort with each leggy bound.

“Protect the fucking eggs!” My inner voice shouts, eyebrows raised. I shake my head because I do not agree with his method, but it doesn't matter as he soon hops out of view.

Hours of the watchful analysis pass. I am finally cuffed and steelfully whisked to the glass box inside the courtroom, door guarded.

I sit for ages and watch mostly drink driving cases, with a sprinkling of meth and weed charges get adjourned or sentenced.

The magistrate seems ok. Just down for business really. He doesn't bust into people like I've seen other magistrates do, belittling and making defendants feel small and stupid. I scan the room occasionally and meet people's eyes as they quickly glance away. I'm the scary criminal in the guarded glass box at this stage. I could be anything to them. I know this because I've often been on the other side staring in, wondering whom the person in the glass box is. What they are about, who do they love, what do they look like when they laugh? I often imagine having a casual street ciggie swap conversation with them – lad chats.

So I make sure to smile at everyone out in the pews... which probably seems really fucking weird to those kneeling about out there. Some look shocked. A mother, eyes wide, nudges her teen son who tilts a head towards me. Heads snap away like birds noticing the worm.

I catch the eye of a small woman in her late 20's. The magistrate has been calling for cases of self-representation. I've been watching older men talk over her for the past fifteen minutes, standing louder than her and cutting her off. I almost yell out in

sympathy every time, but heel myself because what does the boy in the glass box know. Finally I give her an over-acted grimaced shrug, palms to the roof. She smiles brow lifted and echoes my performance while throwing her head back.

The cop guard taps on the glass and gives me a schoolyard stare as the magistrate finally notices our cross-court theatre and calls her to the front.

She gets a one month suspended licence, which she is pleased about and then she leaves for her life.

My turn comes and I stand with the formalities. My duty lawyer argues my case in terms of the bail conditions, she passes on all information about why I need to return to where I am staying; safety, food, lack of funds, all that. The police prosecutor rises and sternly states that she is asking that I don't be released at ALL now. That I stay in custody until my charge case is heard, which we haven't even set a date for yet.

I say very little during all this. I am the blob that all this bureaucracy is swinging around. The affectee. I breathe in through my nose and stare outward. I furrow, purse and sharpen my will. The police prosecutor is playing hardball and is gesturing rapidly toward me. Turns out that I already have a warrant out for my arrest in Queensland from a previous protest. Something that I thought I had totally cleared up and ground through the court mechanisms. It's a minor charge, but the sudden change in the landscape is unnerving. The duty lawyer fumbles while reordering papers and stammers for more time with the client.

I am returned to the room where the lawyer lives. I explain some things; events, errors in administration, misunderstanding of the Queensland court system. She composes and writes. My story seems legit (because it is). Just a fuckup in who was meant to be where and when. We roll through some minutia and then I am taken back to the watery cage.

The push-pull of movement has unsettled me. I pace and scan the architecture. The walls here are only two bricks deep, thin enough to drive a car through for sure. Two friends with some sledge hammers could do some damage pretty fast. What's the decoy?

Fire, always a good one, alarms, flames etc. All the fun stuff.

I can run pretty fast too. I've lost cops in urban expanses before... though never during the day.

I made sure to watch the drive in, sussing the town out and I know I'm vaguely on the northern edge of the CBD.

Of course, this is all just my mind beating away the labours of time. Math problems. Sudoku for those in boxes. Like counting sheep but not a relaxation based on the fencing of animals. What do sheep even jump over in this tradition anyway? Are they jumping the gate to their own freedom? Is this illusionary leaping escape the actual crux of the pathos; the rhythmic element casting a pulse of calming release which goes nowhere? Is it a mistake to rest on the parable of endless individual jumping?

And what if there's another fucking fence???

...I don't fucking know...

I'm back in a cell all of a sudden. My flocking neurons slow. Got caught up in that one. Police finally approach, cuffs on and take me back to the glass box.

The duty lawyer seems happy. I rise and am addressed. The bail condition excluding me from camp has been removed. Just the other normal ones remain, don't go near a train line, don't go into the port yadda yadda.

They must have talked through this without me in the room. I am no longer being held. I am free to go. The police prosecutor looks pissed, but I don't know if there was really much to hold me indefinitely on such minor charges. It's that bail condition that they wanted.

All of a sudden I can see the gate before me and I leap individually like the others. Chukkas to my mates watching in the pews.

I go back to the cop shop for one final process. Signing property forms and getting all my paper work.

I finally get my shoes back in a large vacuum-sealed bag.

I exit and my friends scream and hug me. Exalted.

There's a fence off in the distance but I don't really care right now. I've done enough leaping for today.

With enough practice muscles can only grow stronger.

And perhaps one day people will figure out that charging the gate en'masse is a much more effective road to freedom.

<3



Tim Buchanan

2019

Please send all comments, love letters & hate mail to:

physxforge@gmail.com

Always happy for collabs, projects & swaps

Get involved with Front Line Action on Coal (FLAC) and the Blockade
Adani camp by contacting

<https://frontlineaction.org/>

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BYE ASIO